

**File Code:** 1940  
**Date:** October 26, 2015

Dear Interested Party:

If you are interested in changes to the monitoring program that accompanies the Allegheny National Forest Land and Resource Monitoring Plan (Forest Plan), please read on.

During the upcoming months, the Allegheny National Forest will review and propose updates to our existing monitoring program found in Chapter 4 of the Forest Plan (pp. 37-51; <http://www.fs.usda.gov/main/allegheny/landmanagement/planning>). We will use the administrative change process ((36 CFR §219.13(c)) to incorporate updates into our monitoring program.

The first objective of our review will be to bring our monitoring program into compliance with new planning regulations. The new planning regulations, referred to as the 2012 Planning Rule, state we need to identify how we will monitor the following eight requirements:

1. The status of select watershed conditions.
2. The status of select ecological conditions including key characteristics of terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems.
3. The status of focal species to assess ecological conditions.
4. The status of a select set of ecological conditions that contribute to the recovery of federally listed threatened and endangered species, conserve proposed and candidate species, and maintain a viable population of each species of conservation concern.
5. The status of visitor use, visitor satisfaction, and progress toward meeting recreation objectives.
6. Measureable changes on the plan area related to climate change and other stressors that may be affecting the plan area.
7. Progress toward meeting the desired conditions and objectives in the plan, including for providing multiple use opportunities.
8. The effects of each management system to determine that they do not substantially and permanently impair the productivity of the land (16 USA 1604(g)(3)c)).

As a result, we will identify monitoring to address climate change, select focal species, and assess how we are monitoring the other requirements.

The second objective of our review will be to identify the monitoring that will be most helpful and meaningful to our monitoring of Forest Plan implementation, and is within our technical and funding capacity. We anticipate dropping or changing monitoring questions that are no longer relevant, cost-prohibitive to monitor, or require an expertise not available to us.

We anticipate having our proposed changes posted on our website available for public comment and review this coming winter.



If you are interested in knowing more or would like to be involved, please contact Collin Shephard at (814) 728-6142, or [collinmshephard@fs.fed.us](mailto:collinmshephard@fs.fed.us).

Thank you for your interest in the Allegheny National Forest.

Sincerely,

*/s/ Sherry A. Tune*

SHERRY A. TUNE  
Forest Supervisor